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Roxbury, Jan. 3, 1873.

My dear Wendell:

It is not too late to send you the warm greetings of the season, and to wish you and your beloved ones "a happy new year." After all, how much that we enjoy depends upon ourselves; upon our patience under annoyances; upon our fortitude under afflictions; upon our unselfishness under adverse circumstances; upon our cheerful disposition under disappointments; upon our grateful recognition of the many blessings vouchsafed to us, and of the good we extract even from what we deem the ills and mischances of life. Happiness, however, is a relative term, and changes its quality with the ever-varying conditions of our race. Between the animal happiness of a gourmand and the spiritual happiness of a true saint, what an amazing difference! An exchange of enjoyment would be misery to them both.



So far as the weather was concerned, New Year's day was as near perfection as could reasonably be desired; and, consequently, the streets presented a very animated appearance — quite different from the aspect of our severely cold Christmas day. Indeed, since I came into this breathing world, I do not remember so continuously a cold and an inclement December as the last; and I do not believe that the weather records will show my memory to be at fault. To-day, for the first time for many days, the mercury ranges above the freezing point; and we are having a general thaw and rain, and a real "snow-eater" in the shape of a dense warm fog. The walking and travelling are as bad as one's worst enemy could desire. The Traveller says — "Of all the days of all the years of all time since the flood, this is about the worst." I see, by the telegraphic despatches from New York, that you are having a similar experience.



In your pleasant note, acknowledging the receipt of the Christmas gifts from this quarter, you filially desire for me length of days much beyond the prescribed "three score years and ten," but with an eye to securing favorable life insurance policies for the grandchildren! And you put my exit at 114 years, with the intimation that I might have attained to the age of 150, if I had not resorted to the use of patent medicines!—Of course, I relished your humor to the brim. But I triumphantly rejoin—what an indubitable proof it gives of the efficacy of such treatment, that it enables one to reach an age much beyond a century; whereas, by neglecting <sup>the use of</sup> ~~the use of~~ allopathic or despising it, or by resorting to <sup>scientific</sup> ~~scientific~~ drugs, his chance is, like the nicker, that he will not live out half his days! The grandchildren shall say of their grandfather—"He believed with the Apostle in proving all things, (patent medicines included,) and holding fast that which is good." Praise enough!



William has presented me (as a New Year's remembrance) with Black's large size panorama of the Great Fire in Boston, handsomely framed. It is more than four feet and a half wide, and gives a vivid impression at a glance of the terrible devastation caused by that calamity. It is a picture that will possess historic interest, and be worth preserving to a late day.

You so over-appreciate the few parental tokens of love and remembrance you receive as somewhat to lessen the pleasure we take in sending them. My only regret is that, being out of any remunerative employment, I cannot indulge my desire to show these little attentions half as often as I could wish, except by a sacrifice and curtailment of what <sup>is</sup> invested. But you know where my heart is, without the need of any special manifestation of its affection for you and yours.